

**COMBINING THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE TRAINING  
OF LOGISTICS SPECIALISTS: THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL  
EXPERIENCE**

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*The rapidly changing labour market, driven by scientific and technological advancements, demands more practical and specialized competencies. In Ukraine, academic mobility is increasingly important for training professionals who will be essential in the post-war reconstruction of the country's infrastructure.*

Nowadays, when receiving a higher education, it is worth understanding that the university usually provides general theoretical knowledge. Often this knowledge is enough to have a solid base, on which practical skills and narrow-profile needs of the profession are laid later. But it is worth remembering that the modern labour market is changing following scientific and technical progress, creating new methods and opportunities in the educational space for finding fresh heads, increasing competitiveness and uniting young people from all over the world. One such possibility is academic mobility, which has already found its adaptation in Ukraine but has not yet obtained a permanent place and purpose in the general public education system.

In recent years, the training of professional personnel in logistics has been developing rapidly within the walls of higher educational institutions in Ukraine. The political and economic situation in the country always has an impact on the professional market. Therefore, analysing the current conditions and planning for the future, it becomes clear that in the post-war period, Ukraine will need to rebuild its transport system as a priority. This is where the stable and popular formulation immediately comes to mind, that our country will rely on the international experience of the world.

The demand for logistics specialists will automatically increase, but the quality of professional personnel will also be taken into account. Logistics specialists, upon graduating from university, know the economic, legislative and organisational management levels both domestic and international. It will not be enough to provide them with only theoretical knowledge and a

theoretical overview of new technologies and applications that are currently being used in the profession. And taking into account the direct future participation and influence on the reconstruction of the country, it is worth providing them with the necessary international experience during the study itself, to find its adaptation in practice immediately after receiving the diploma.

The system of academic mobility and grants is designed in such a way that after it the student becomes a potentially more attractive candidate for the employer and an important driving force that can make a significant contribution to the country itself. Such programs are aimed not only at obtaining theoretical knowledge but also at performing very clear concrete steps, acquiring skills and working out practical skills.

Due to the wide variety of forms of mobility, each student can choose something according to his needs and requests. A classic example of mobility within the higher education framework is individual programs such as Erasmus+, which is a connecting component of European universities, students, and professors. This program's involvement successfully affects the process of European integration thanks to the convergence of the education system and professional competencies with the standards recommended by the European Union.

But it is worth noting that the fact that Ukraine is only at the initial stage of entering the world educational space is noticeable both in the non-comparability of professional programs and in the complexity of the whole mobility process (for example, the selection of relevant disciplines that could be recognized in the home Ukrainian university).

Speaking from the author's own experience and the path of passing the Erasmus+ program from NAU in the speciality of logistics, the first noticeable problem was the small selection of available open grants. Therefore, after deciding to try oneself in such an academic opportunity, it was necessary to constantly monitor the site of international relations and hope for the availability of time to prepare documents before the deadline. The next stage is the process of preparing and sending documents.

The list of documents, regardless of the competition under the academic mobility program, including a questionnaire with individual information of the candidate, a motivation letter, the candidate's resume, a copy of the foreign passport, the average score of the previous years (which must be ordered at the university in advance and the ability to do it online makes it much easier), a certificate of foreign language proficiency and a study plan for the selected period of mobility. The presence of a certificate of

confirmed English language proficiency, which is a mandatory selection criterion, facilitates the application process and gives priority to other candidates. Therefore, it is necessary not to neglect taking the exam in advance, which is also important for the professional future.

The process of drawing up a study plan is the most resource- and time-consuming. After all, from the list of courses and disciplines offered by the host university (in the example of the author it was Białystok University of Technology in Poland), it was necessary to choose the appropriate ones so that they could be re-enrolled at NAU. However, the difference between the European and Ukrainian education systems is noticeable even in the disciplines of the same specialities. There were presented only subjects of the general engineering speciality course. Therefore, the note about re-enrollment was purely theoretical in my case. After fulfilling all the conditions, an interview was conducted with the selected candidates, which shows the fairness and structure of the selection.

Being already a participant in academic mobility showed another difficulty in the study itself, namely the combination of two universities. As was mentioned earlier, the systems and disciplines are different, which is why they were not listed in any semesters of NAU. To successfully close the semester at the sending university and not stay for another year, attending and passing all assignments were mandatory components. Applications for re-enrollment of credits of similar disciplines, unfortunately, were not taken into account at that time.

But despite all the difficulties, this experience is beneficial and profitable. Worth noting that most of the subjects during mobility became similar to future disciplines at NAU. For example, passing transport logistics and human resource management at a Polish university provided competencies and knowledge to facilitate their passage in the current semester at NAU. It cannot be failed also to note the significant impact on personal development, language competencies and practical experience of living and working in a new cultural environment. The acquired experience provided soft skills such as adaptability, flexibility, time management and communication, which also became a good and confident part of the resume. In addition, the program became a motivating element for comparing education systems and approaches to learning, determining one's priorities in learning.

Obtaining a diploma, unfortunately, does not currently guarantee successful employment, so it is a good opportunity for universities to offer students the acquisition of additional competencies and expand

their knowledge in their chosen field. The very process of applying, going through selection and interviews, and preparing documents faces the student up for future interviews and recruitments. Therefore, this is a good opportunity to compile the resume, motivational letter and personal branding, skills that will certainly benefit in the future professional life.

### **Conclusions**

Modern higher education must adapt to the requirements of the labour market and scientific-technological progress, providing students with not only a theoretical base but also practical experience. Academic mobility, such as programs like Erasmus+, offers students valuable opportunities to gain international experience, which can be crucial for their future careers. This is especially important now in such fields as logistics, where specialists must be ready to participate in the reconstruction of Ukraine after the war, taking into account international experience and modern technologies.

While Ukraine's integration into the global education space is still developing, mobility programs help students acquire both hard and soft skills, making them more attractive candidates for employers and better prepared for the demands of the modern workforce. These experiences not only equip students with critical skills but also prepare them to contribute to Ukraine's economic and professional landscape on a global scale. However, for the full integration of Ukraine into the international educational space, further optimization of programs and procedures is required, which will allow to removal of existing barriers and increase the efficiency of specialist training.

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